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Library Trustees Minutes 03-14-2006

Robbins Library Board of Trustees
March 14, 2006

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 PM. Attending were trustees David Castiglioni, Patricia Deal, Katharine Fennelly, Barbara Muldoon, Frank Murphy, Joyce Radochia and Susan Ruderman. Also attending were library director Maryellen Loud and assistant director Cynthia Diminture.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 21st meeting were approved with corrections on a motion by Ms. Muldoon; seconded by Ms. Radochia. Ms. Fennelly abstained.

Communications

1. A note was received from Page Lindsay thanking the Board for her retirement open house and good wishes. 2. Ms. Loud shared with the Board a notice from the Board of Selectmen dated 2/13/06, unanimously approving the trustees' proposal to create a lecture series in memory of Margaret Spengler. The members thanked Ms. Radochia for her presentation and Mr. Greeley expressed interest in serving on the planning committee. 3. Ms. Loud brought to the attention of the Board a flyer promoting Library Legislative Day which will take place on Wednesday, April 5th at the State House. All trustees were invited to attend. 4. The Board of Selectmen approved the hanging of the library banners on Massachusetts Avenue during the month of April, during which National Library Week is celebrated. 5. Ms. Loud showed the trustees a flyer for an upcoming promotional event regarding the rental of the Robbins Memorial Town Hall Auditorium and the Robbins Library Reading Room for functions. The event will take place on Sunday, April 2nd. 6. Arlington resident Bill Mickle, who performs as a historic re-enactor, offered to do a program as a fundraiser for the library.

Director's Report

The trustees reviewed the written report of the director. Questions were asked regarding software issues, unruly young adults in the library and the hiring of a new Branch Librarian. The library has entered a team in the upcoming "brain bee" sponsored by the Arlington Educational Enrichment Fund. The team, sponsored by the Friends of the Robbins Library, is composed of Katharine Fennelly, Michael Ruderman and Desiree Goodman. The Board wished them well.

FY07 Budget Update

Ms. Loud reported that the Finance Committee had asked for additional information about the library trust funds. The Finance Committee has approved the library budget as submitted. Last week, the Selectmen held a meeting with department heads to

discuss the budgets. For this session, Ms. Loud needed to set out implications of a level funded budget and for budgets with ten per cent increases and decreases respectively. Ms. Lacourt asked the library to explore the creation of an endowment. The Finance Committee reserves the right to further reduce budgets depending on costs for employee health insurance and collective bargaining agreements. Ms. Loud will keep the Board apprised of the budget process.

Fundraising

The trustees discussed the status of the foundation. Mr. Murphy will consult the MA Board of Library Commissioners regarding libraries that currently have foundations. Ms. Ruderman reports that the post-card follow-up solicitation was only slightly successful. She raised a fundraising suggestion to have historical library photographs made into colored postcards for sale. Ms. Fennelly made a motion to expend up to \$150 for the creation of the postcard; seconded by Mr. Murphy. Passed unanimously. Ms. Loud and Ms. Deal attended the recent Brookline Library fundraising gala. The event included dinner, live music and silent and live auctions. Ms. Loud and Arlington Town Manager Brian Sullivan will meet with the Brookline library director to discuss details concerning the planning of such an event.

Art Work at Fox Branch

A proposal regarding revolving art exhibits at the Fox Branch was re-visited. Ms. Loud had reviewed the existing display policy including information on sales of the art pieces. Brian Sullivan would like to move forward with this project if the details can be worked out. A suggestion was made to try this on a time-limited basis. The Board made a list of questions and issues for Ms. Loud to discuss with the Town Manager. Ms. Ruderman suggested inviting the proposed curator to a trustees' meeting to discuss details and answer questions.

Author Programs

Ms. Deal has had a commitment from Anita Diamant for a program on Thursday, May 25th. She will discuss her new book "The Last Days of Dogtown" and her other books will be available for sale. She has also been in contact with Claire Cook who was amenable to speaking but not prior to October 2007, as she is now involved in writing another book. Ms. Deal left a message for Gail Caldwell who may be interested in speaking in the fall of 2006. She will work out the details with Ms. Caldwell's publicist.

Annual Report Flyer

Ms. Loud passed out copies of those from the last three years as guidelines. Most liked the "accomplishments" section and the "money's worth" comparison. A draft will be presented at the next meeting.

Review of Warrant Article

The article is being prepared by Town Counsel for the creation of a revolving fund to accommodate funds raised from the rental of the library Reading Room.

Friends of the Library Update

Ms. Diminture apprised the Board on the work of the Friends of the Library. A successful mid-winter book sale took place on March 4th. The next sale will take place in September in conjunction with Town Day. The Friends' annual meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, April 27th in the Community Room. A short business meeting with election of officers will be held at 7PM. The current treasurer has agreed to continue in that capacity. The Friends are seeking a new president and secretary. A slide presentation on the Boston Post Roads will follow the meeting. Paul Hogman of the Arlington Historical Society will be the presenter. New members may join the Friends that evening at the new member rate of \$10. A meeting of the newly formed program sub-committee will take place on Wednesday, March 22nd. Plans will be made for at least two programs and a fundraising event. A future trustee agenda item will be a discussion of ways in which to support the Friends in their activities.

Other

Ms. Deal reported that on Tuesday, March 28th, the Arlington Historical Society will present a program on Vittoria Dallin. Ms. Fennelly raised a question about the missing sidewalk lights. Ms. Loud explained that replacement lighting is being investigated. Ms. Loud asked the Board to consider an expensive program for middle-school students being proposed by the Russell Fund Coordinator. Ms. Ruderman asked whether similar programs exist at a lower cost which would accommodate a larger number of children. A positive aspect of this would be offering something interesting for a hard-to-attract age group. A test program could be tried next year.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM on a motion by Ms. Fennelly; seconded by Ms. Muldoon. The next meeting will take place on **Wednesday, April 12th at 7:15 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Diminture